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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4891
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RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1330
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1166
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY 0655
RUEAHLG/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1069

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 002387

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/EX AND WHA/CAR
S/CRS
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)
WHA/EX PLEASE PASS TO OAS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/14/2011
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: SENATORS PRESS PM ON INSECURITY

REF: A. PORT AU PRINCE 2359
[1](#)B. PORT AU PRINCE 2087
[1](#)C. PORT AU PRINCE 2341
[1](#)D. PORT AU PRINCE 2219

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Classified By: Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson for reason 1.4(B).

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis, acting in his capacity as chief of the High Council of the National Police (CSPN), testified December 13 in front of the senate commission on defense, justice and security, pledging to undertake actions against the bandits responsible for the rise in insecurity and kidnapping. Senator Youri Latortue pressed the PM to promise that the government will abandon its policy of negotiating with the gangs in accordance with Haitian law. The Prime Minister made no guarantees but attributed the rise in insecurity to the deportees from the U.S., and said that the USG and GoH have re-opened discussion on the issue. Claiming once again that Ambassador threatened to revoke visas of certain officials and cut off aid to Haiti if the deportations did not continue, the PM ignored Pressoff's oft-repeated denial of such threats following the PM's presentation to the chamber of deputies last week (ref A). As the security situation worsens in Port-au-Prince, public frustration -- manifested recently by the parliamentarians' dissatisfaction with the Prime Minister -- with GoH policy of negotiation with the criminals increases. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) The head of the senate commission on defense, justice and security, Youri Latortue, welcomed the PM and demanded that the government take a stronger stance in the face of criminal activity which "imposes terror in the capital." He recounted the worst crimes in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area since October, the same month, Latortue recalled, former state employees launched Operation Paka Tan-n (Creole for We Cannot Wait) demanding their old jobs back (ref B). According to press reports, the Prime Minister said that the GoH would continue to negotiate with the bandits, because an attack on the gangs could cause a genocide punishable by the International Criminal Court.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The Prime Minister insisted that the rise in

kidnapping is due "in large part" to deportees from the U.S. The U.S. and GoH had agreed to discuss the problem, but at the request of the U.S., he would no longer discuss this issue in front of the press. (Note: In private meetings, both Ambassador and WHA Deputy Assistant Secretary Duddy told PM Alexis that publicly blaming deportees for the rise in insecurity could serve as a distraction and would be better discussed in private (ref C). In a follow-up conversation with Poloff, Senator Edmond Supplice expressed irritation with the PM's terseness because "parliamentarians are not the press, but part of the government." End note.) PM Alexis said that his government would soon submit a new law to the parliament concerning deportees, and mentioned the possible construction of a reintegration center for deportees. A bicameral committee made up of the senate and chamber security commissions have given the CSPN, which comprises the PM, the justice minister, the police director general, and the state secretary for public security, one month to produce results. Alexis, as the head of the CSPN, will have to report to the bicameral committee mid-January.

14. (SBU) PM Alexis repeated his declarations that post threatened to revoke visas of certain officials and cut its aid to Haiti, despite numerous press reports quoting Pressoff's denial of any such threats. "I only repeat what they said during the conversations we have had to try and sway their position on this issue." PM Alexis' statements are in the press again today, this time coupled with reminders of post's categorical denial of the threats.

15. (C) Comment: The Prime Minister's latest testimony occurred the same day that kidnappers abducted 15 children on their way to school, bringin public outcry and demands for immediate governmnt action to a fever pitch. The security issue as galvanized the heretofore fractious parliament. As the head of the CSPN, the PM must take responsbility for

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the security situation before the parliament, but Alexis is also taking the blame for the broader failures of the Preval government on both security and social issues. Still, he continues to defend an indefensible policy, one that even Preval appears to have jettisoned. There remains no support among any significant segment of Haitian society, nor apparently within any other quarter of the GoH, for the dialogue with gang members. While blaming deportees for insecurity plays well to a point, picking a fight with us over the issue, without any other action against crime, could further undermine his position.

16. (C) Comment Continued: As reported in ref D, we believe that Alexis remains secure in his job for the moment, in part because President Preval has given no public signal he is dissatisfied with his PM and in part because there is a notable dearth of ready alternatives. Nevertheless, leaders within parliament and the political parties contemplated bringing a vote of no confidence against Alexis. If the GoH cannot make significant progress on the security front in the coming weeks, contemplation may turn to action.

SANDERSON